<u>REMARKS/ARGUMENTS</u>

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 5, 7-14, and 17-19 remain pending in this application. By this Amendment, Claims 1 and 13 have been amended. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 13 is found, by way of non-limiting example, in the specification, page 17, lines 9-12. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 5, 7-9, 11-14 and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over <u>LoBiondo et al.</u> (U.S. 5,305,199, hereinafter "<u>LoBiondo</u>") in view of <u>Tami et al.</u> (U.S. 2004/0059634 A1, hereinafter "<u>Tami</u>") and <u>Landesmann</u> (U.S. 2002/0053076 A1); and Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over <u>LoBiondo</u> in view of <u>Tami</u> and <u>Landesmann</u> as applied to Claims 1 and 8 above, and further in view of <u>Kobayashi et al.</u> (U.S. 2004/0083260 A1, hereinafter "<u>Kobayashi</u>").

<u>LoBiondo</u> is directed to a system that "[t]hrough remote interactive communications capabilities, the system can automatically or semi-automatically submit orders for supplies, receive information relating to estimated and/or delayed shipping dates, and update the status of the inventory on the basis of confirmed shipment or order receipt information."[1] In <u>LoBiondo</u> a "user interface module is connected by a suitable databus 19 for providing signals to and receiving signals from an inventory tracking system module 20 that tracks the inventory and reorder status of consumable supplies, such as marking materials in the form of toners or inks, and recording media, such as paper sheets."[2] This is accomplished in

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[1] Column 1, lines 46-52.
[2] Column 2, lines 38-44.

10

LoBiondo because "usage information can be derived relating to the number of sheets of each size of paper or the amount of toner or ink used in the predetermined time period."[3]

LoBiondo has a remote communications capability[4] "so that information to and from a remote supplies ordering location can be effected."[5] In LoBiondo "[e]xpected delivery and shipment information can be transmitted via link 27b to reprographic machine 10 and displayed on the UI 12 of reprographic machine 10 or another of the reprographic machines in the network 28."[6]

LoBiondo fails to describe automatically authenticating user having an IC tag as recited in amended Claims 1 and 13.

Tami is directed to a system in which "inventory management systems are interfaced with the store's host computer."[7] In Tami:

> hand-held units 58 are designed to read the bar code of stock items. The hand held units 58 are interfaced with an in-store Point of Sale (POS) system in the inventory management system discussed earlier to provide and display current inventory and pricing data on each stock item bar code that it reads.[8]

Tami describes a manual cashier sign-on and sign-off procedure as being standard for all operators on all terminals. Tami states [c]ashier sign-on requires entry of a minimum two (2) or three (3) digit customizable) cashier number and a minimum two (2) digit secret code (password)."[9] Regarding customer demographic capture, Tami states:

> Customer Demographics capture 120 is implemented using an Express Customer Card to identify the preferred expressed Customer. When a customer requests an Express customer card, and Express customer file is established at the host computer.[10]

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[3] Column 2, lines 62-65.
[4] Column 3, line 17.
[5] Column 3, lines 18-20.
[6] Column 3, lines 42-46.
[7] Paragraph [0012].
[8] Paragraph [0054].
[9] Paragraph [0300].
[10] Paragraph [0488].

Finally, with regard to a special event promotion, Tami states "[t] later in the store, when the cashier scans or key enters the Express Customer Card 186 the POS system 108 passes the card number to a cache with request for shopper data from the Customer file 188."[11]

Therefore, there is no description in Tami of automatically authenticating the user having an IC tag as recited in amended Claims 1 and 13.

Landesmann describes "storage devices 44 and 46, which for example may be implemented by disk and CD-ROM drives or arrays for storing one or more searchable electronic databases that include buyer personally identifiable data, buyer preference data and buyer purchase data."[12] Landesmann indicates that "buyer entities would submit information on their credit card statements and other verifiable information on their past purchases."[13] Other examples include a buyer submitting a proof of purchase by using a credit card or a smart cart.[14]

Therefore, Landesmann does not describe automatically authenticating the user having an IC tag as recited in amended Claims 1 and 13.

No cited reference describes or renders obvious the amended-claimed features. Tami describes that a user is authenticated by scanning/entering a card. In the technique of Tami, the user needs to have an intention to be authenticated using the card and needs to scan or enter the card.

On the other hand, according to the claimed invention, a user can be automatically authenticated when the user comes to the image forming apparatus within a certain distance without an intention to be authenticated. Therefore, according to the present invention, convenience of a general user who frequently uses the image forming apparatus is highly

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[11] Paragraph [0498].
[12] Paragraph [0122].
[13] Paragraph [0111].
[14] Paragraph [0149].

improved since it is not necessary to scan/enter a card each time when using the image

forming apparatus for authentication.

Kobayashi fails to correct the deficiencies of LoBiondo, Tami and Landesmann

because Kobayashi neither describes nor renders obvious the features of Claims 1 and 13

described above.

It is respectfully submitted that Claims 5, 7-12, 14 and 17-19 are patentable at least

for the reasons argued above with regard to the claims from which they depend.
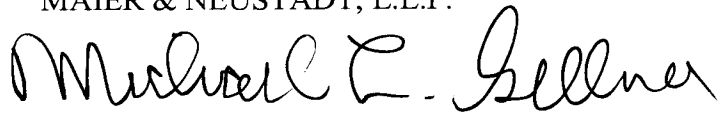
Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of Claims 1, 5, 7-14 and

17-19 be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that Claims 1, 5, 7-14 and 17-19 be passed to

allowance.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed

to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in

condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this

application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the

undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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13